

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Highway System Engineering

Division of Transportation System Information

When considering changes to approved functional classification maps based on the 2000 census, the changes must be consistent with the requirements described in the "Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures Manual" published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The guidelines that are in effect now were released by the FHWA in March of 1989.

City streets and County roads - Each county and incorporated city is responsible for initiating requests to change the functional classification of city streets utilizing the Functional Classification Change Request Form (provided by Headquarters Caltrans). City and county staff will provide the necessary justification for the proposed classification change by supplying a copy of the city or county resolution, map(s) displaying the change(s) and Functional Classification Change Request Form. The changes must be consistent with the FHWA guidelines.

State highways - Caltrans districts are responsible for initiating requests to change the functional classification of state highways. District staff would provide the necessary justification for the proposed classification change. The changes must be consistent with the FHWA guidelines, Functional Classification Change Request Form, and map(s).

Changes to other facilities (Forest service roads, State Park roads, Indian Reservation roads, etc.) must be initiated by the affected agency that has jurisdiction over that facility. The staff of each agency would provide the necessary justification for the proposed classification change (map(s) and Functional Classification Change Request Form). The Caltrans districts assist with answers to questions these agencies may have regarding the proposed functional classification changes.

Once a request is initiated by the responsible agency, it must be submitted for concurrence to the appropriate Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA). This requirement applies to all public roads (city streets, county roads, state highways, forest roads, park roads, etc.) having a proposed functional classification change. Once the changes have been approved by the MPO or RTPA a letter of acceptance will be included.

When an MPO or RTPA proposes the change of functional classification of a public road, it must involve the appropriate entities that have jurisdiction over that facility to ensure that recommendations are mutually acceptable.

The city or county then forwards the update package (Functional Classification Change Request Form, maps, city or county resolution, and MPO/RTPA concurrence letter) to the Caltrans district coordinator who catalogs the changes. Should a portion of the required documents be missing or incomplete, the update process will be delayed in headquarters until all the information is acquired from the districts. The district coordinator will review all proposals and submit their independent recommendations or concurrence letter with the update package.

The Caltrans district coordinator forwards this package, with all the justifications request documents and concurrence letters, to the Highway System Engineering Branch, Division of Transportation System Information Program, Caltrans HQ, for evaluation and recommendation to the FHWA.